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**AFGHANISTAN**

## SNAPSHOT

# Opening a Road to Reconciliation

**Rival Pashtun and Hazara tribesmen must work together to level and widen the treacherous Tamazan Road**



Photo: USAID/CDP/CADG

*Pashtun and Hazara laborers clear a path as supply trucks crawl up the narrow Tamazan Road.*

***While tensions remain, the project has allowed the rival tribesmen to work together to achieve a common goal.***

It is not every day that two rival tribes come together to work cooperatively and peacefully. However, that is exactly what happened because of a USAID project.

Carved into a mountainside a few years ago, the rough, rutted Tamazan Road currently serves as the sole means of vehicle access in and out of the province. The road allows traffic to flow from Nili, the provincial capital, through the disputed border district of Gizab and to the southern provinces of Uruzgan, Kandahar, and Hilmand. During heavy winter rains and snowfall, Daykundi Province is typically cut off from the rest of Afghanistan. Tamazan Road is the only artery that remains partially passable.

In order to improve regional transportation infrastructure and Daykundi's access to commercial markets, USAID, and its implementing partner CADG, enlisted 530 local laborers and foremen on a three-month project to level, widen, and reinforce 5.5 km of this key route. The laborers were recruited from Gizab District, home to the traditionally feuding Pashtun and Hazara tribes. However, distribution of the Tamazan Road project labor assignments between the rival tribes has spurred unprecedented cooperation between the two tribes. While tensions certainly remain, it is undeniable that something special is happening in the province: rival tribesmen working together to produce mutual benefit and achieve a common goal.

A local laborer commented on the cooperative effort, summing up the popular sentiment of a people who have grown weary of conflict and want nothing more than to work together to build a better future for their children: "This project seems to have created good relations between Hazara and Pashtuns. It may be the first time I have seen both tribes working together and helping each other at work. So we all are thankful to USAID."

Thanks to the cooperative efforts of rival Pashtun and Hazara tribesmen, a significant section of Tamazan Road will double its current width and serve as a key access route to remote Daykundi Province. USAID is helping the people of Daykundi in their effort to build roads leading to sustainability and reconciliation.